

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6061

STADIS//////////

EA ONLY FOR HOLBROOKE AND OAKLEY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, TH
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS--U.S. POLICY TOWARD THAILAND

REF: STATE 061617

1. THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME KNOW OF THE REVIEW OF THE
ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM WHICH IS TAKING PLACE.

2. TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, I AM CHAGRINED TO NOTE WHAT
APPEARS TO ME TO BE A COMPLETE DISREGARD OF THE VERY
SATISFACTORY RESULTS OF THE THAI EFFORT IN 1976. I
WOULD URGE THAT YOU GET A BRIEFING ON WHAT HAS BEEN
GOING ON AND I DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE
ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF HEROIN SEIZED IN THAILAND IN 1976.
THAI CUSTOMS AT THE DON MUANG AIRPORT ALONE ACCOUNTED
FOR NEARLY 250 KILOS OF THE 600 KILO TOTAL. IN
ADDITION, THAI COOPERATION HAS RESULTED IN SEIZURES
ELSEWHERE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CURRENT ROTTERDAM CASE
IN WHICH ABOUT 125 KILOS WERE SEIZED ORIGINATED HERE.
I WOULD VENTURE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN MORE SEIZURES,
ARRESTS, ETC., IN THAILAND THAN IN ANY COUNTRY IN THE
WORLD, BUT THE KEY THING IS THE TREND AND THE TREND
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SHOWS A QUITE FANTASTIC IMPROVEMENT OVER RESULTS IN
PREVIOUS YEARS.

3. MOST OF THE FOREGOING ACHIEVEMENTS TOOK PLACE
BEFORE PRIME MINISTER THANIN CAME TO POWER, BUT HE
HAS GIVEN THE ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN HIS HIGHEST
PRIORITY AND HAS BEEN DOING HIS UTMOST TO MAKE THE

THAI PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE.

4. THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WILL SAY THAT THE SEIZURES HERE GO THROUGH A REVOLVING DOOR AND BACK ON THE STREET. THE RTG IS NOW PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO AN AUTO-DA-FE AND YOU WILL HAVE SEEN BANGKOK 5968 ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. PLEASE REVIEW THE MESSAGE I GOT IN DECEMBER 1975 FM S/NM VANCE (STATE 304901) AND MY REPLY (BANGKOK 0933, JAN 15, 1976). THE SITUATION TODAY IS FAR BETTER THAN IT WAS THEN, BUT MY VIEW OF THE NECESSITY OF KEEPING THE THAI EFFORT AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE REMAINS UNCHANGED. AS I HAVE POINTED OUT MANY TIMES, ONE OF THE BASIC PROBLEMS IS THE WIDE DIFFERENCE IN THE WAY VARIOUS OBSERVERS SEE THE THAI NARCOTICS EFFORT. OBVIOUSLY THE PROGRAM HAS SHORTCOMINGS, BUT SOME OBSERVERS STRESS ONLY THAI VENALITY, CORRUPTION AND INDOLENCE. THE THAI THEMSELVES THINK THEY ARE MAKING A GREAT EFFORT AND THAT THE RESULTS ARE SENSATIONAL. THE PAPERS DAILY CARRY ACCOUNTS OF SEIZURES HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE AND THIS FOSTERS THE IMPRESSION OF A REALLY HARD-HITTING EFFECTIVE PROGRAMTODAY'S PAPER TELLS OF AN ENGLISH GIRL BEING ARRESTED, THURSDAY'S DESCRIBED 14 KILOS OF HEROIN FOUND IN THE KLM FLIGHT ...ETC., ETC. OBVIOUSLY THE TRUTH LIES SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE, BUT IN ANYTHING WE SAY TO THE THAI WE MUST BEAR IN MIND
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THAT THEIR IMPRESSION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR EFFORTS IS SUPPORTED TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT BY THE GRATIFYING RESULTS THEY HAVE BEEN ACHIEVING.

6. I AM MOST ANXIOUS TO GET A CHANCE TO TALK ALL THIS OVER WITH BOURNE AND FALCO NEXT MONTH AND HOPE THAT DECISIONS CAN BE DEFERRED UNTIL AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN HERE. IN SOME WAYS, I REGRET THAT A CODEL WILL BE HERE DURING THEIR VISIT AS THIS WILL LIMIT THE TIME I CAN SPEND WITH THEM. I DO HOPE THEY WILL EXTEND THEIR VISIT BEYOND THE PERIOD OF THE NARCOTICS CONFERENCE OR THAT WE CAN ARRANGE TO GET TOGETHER AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE CODEL AS THERE ARE MANY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS WHICH WE SHOULD DISCUSS. WARM REGARDS.
WHITEHOUSE

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